

What is claimed is:

1. A method for highlighting display elements of an interactive television program guide comprising:

highlighting a first display element using a first display characteristic;

highlighting the first display element for a predefined period of time using a second display characteristic in response to a user of the interactive television program guide indicating a desire to access a second display element;

unhighlighting the first display element after highlighting the first display element for the predefined period of time; and

highlighting a second display element using the first display characteristic.

2. The method defined in claim 1 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first color; and

the second display characteristic is a second color.

3. The method defined in claim 1 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first shade; and

the second display characteristic is a second shade.

4. A method for highlighting display elements of an interactive television program guide comprising:

highlighting a first display element using a first display characteristic;

highlighting the first display element using a second display characteristic in response to a user of the interactive television program guide selecting the first display element; and

highlighting the first display element using a third display characteristic in response to the user indicating a desire to access a second display element.

5. The method defined in claim 4 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first color;

the second display characteristic is a second color; and

the third display characteristic is a third color.

6. The method defined in claim 4 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first shade;

the second display characteristic is a second shade; and

the third display characteristic is a third shade.

7. A method for providing advertisements in an interactive television program guide having a plurality of guide elements, wherein the advertisements are associated with the subject matter of the guide elements, comprising:

providing a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to access a first guide element having a subject matter;

providing a first advertisement associated with the subject matter of the first guide element in response to the user accessing the first guide element;

providing the user with an opportunity to access a second guide element having a subject matter; and

providing a second advertisement associated with the subject matter of the second guide element in response to the user accessing the second guide element.

8. The method defined in claim 7 wherein the first guide element is a guide feature, guide option, or guide function.

9. The method defined in claim 7 wherein:
the subject matter of the first guide element includes television program listings; and
the first advertisement is for a television program having an associated program listing withing the subject matter of the first guide element.

10. The method defined in claim 7 wherein:
the subject matter of the first guide element includes an Internet service; and
the first advertisement is for the Internet service.

11. A method for providing a sliding navigational paradigm within an interactive television program guide having a number of display elements comprising:

providing a first display of display elements;

indicating to a user of the interactive television program guide that additional display elements are available using cutoffs;

providing the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to access the additional display elements;

sliding out the first display in response to the user indicating a desire to access additional display elements; and

sliding in a second display of the additional display element while sliding out the first display.

12. The method defined in claim 11 wherein the additional display elements are program listings.

13. A method for providing an anchor bar within an interactive television program guide comprising:

providing the anchor bar, wherein the anchor bar includes multiple indicators of locations within the interactive television program guide;

highlighting an indicator associated with the user's current location within the interactive television program guide;

providing the user with an opportunity to change the user's location within the interactive television program guide; and

dynamically changing the indicators in the anchor bar in response to the user changing the user's location within the interactive television program guide.

14. The method defined in claim 13 further comprising arranging the indicators within the anchor bar hierarchically.

15. A method for providing a graphical display region within an interactive television program guide comprising:

providing the navigational display region having a plurality of options;

providing a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to select an option of the navigational display region;

displaying the selected option in a sliver; and

simultaneously displaying the sliver, navigational display region, and information associated with the selected option in response to the user selecting the option.

16. The method defined in claim 15 wherein the option is a time and the information is a program listing.

17. The method defined in claim 15 wherein the option is a letter and the information is a program listing.

18. A method for providing dynamically associated actions as options within an interactive television program guide comprising:

providing a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to select a program;

dynamically associating actions with the selected program;

providing the user with an opportunity to select an action of the associated actions; and
providing the selected action to the user.

19. The method defined in claim 18 wherein:
the method further comprises providing the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to access actions available for the selected program; and
dynamically associating actions with the selected program comprises dynamically associating actions with the selected program in response to the user indication.

20. The method defined in claim 18 wherein dynamically associating actions with the selected program comprises using metadata to associate the actions.

21. A method for providing displays of program listings by category comprising:
receiving a user indication to view listings by category for multiple categories;
determining whether there are listings available for each category of the multiple categories;
making available for selection only categories for which listings are available;
providing the user with an opportunity to select a category of the categories for which listings are available; and
providing a display of listings for the selected category.

22. A method for providing coded indicators within an interactive television program guide comprising:

presenting first softkeys coded to keys on a user input device;

receiving selection from a user of the interactive television program guide of a program guide feature, wherein the user selection was made without using the softkeys; and

presenting second softkeys coded to keys on the user input device whiner the second softkeys are functionally related to the program guide feature.

23. The method defined in claim 22 wherein presenting the second softkeys comprises providing the second softkeys in a browse display.

24. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the second softkeys are pay-per-view-related features.

25. A method for providing a video display synchronized to user indicated listings within an interactive television program guide comprising:

providing a user of the interactive television program guide with opportunities to identify a plurality of listings;

providing the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to navigate the user identified listings;

providing a video display and the identified listings in response to the user indication;

providing the user with an opportunity to navigate within the identified listings; and

synchronizing the video display to the user navigation of the listings.

26. The method defined in claim 25 wherein the program listings are historical listings.

27. The method defined in claim 25 wherein the program listings are favorite listings.

28. The method defined in claim 25 wherein the program listings are listings of programs for which reminders are scheduled.

29. An interactive television program guide system in which display elements of an interactive television program guide are highlighted, comprising:

means for highlighting a first display element using a first display characteristic;

means for highlighting the first display element for a predefined period of time using a second display characteristic in response to a user of the interactive television program guide indicating a desire to access a second display element;

means for unhighlighting the first display element after highlighting the first display element for the predefined period of time; and

means for highlighting a second display element using the first display characteristic.

30. The system defined in claim 29 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first color; and

the second display characteristic is a second color.

31. The system defined in claim 29 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a
first shade; and
the second display characteristic is a
second shade.

32. An interactive television program guide
system in which display elements of an interactive
television program guide are highlighted, comprising:
means for highlighting a first display
element using a first display characteristic;
means for highlighting the first display
element using a second display characteristic in
response to a user of the interactive television
program guide selecting the first display element; and
means for highlighting the first display
element using a third display characteristic in
response to the user indicating a desire to access a
second display element.

33. The system defined in claim 32 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a
first color;
the second display characteristic is a
second color; and
the third display characteristic is a
third color.

34. The system defined in claim 32 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a
first shade;
the second display characteristic is a
second shade; and

the third display characteristic is a third shade.

35. An interactive television program guide system for providing advertisements associated with the subject matter of guide elements of an interactive television program guide, comprising:

means for providing a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to access a first guide element having a subject matter;

means for providing a first advertisement associated with the subject matter of the first guide element in response to the user accessing the first guide element;

means for providing the user with an opportunity to access a second guide element having a subject matter; and

means for providing a second advertisement associated with the subject matter of the second guide element in response to the user accessing the second guide element.

36. The system defined in claim 35 wherein the first guide element is a guide feature, guide option, or guide function.

37. The system defined in claim 35 wherein:

the subject matter of the first guide element includes television program listings; and

the first advertisement is for a television program having an associated program listing withing the subject matter of the first guide element.

38. The system defined in claim 35 wherein:
the subject matter of the first guide
element includes an Internet service; and
the first advertisement is for the
Internet service.

39. An interactive television program guide
system having a sliding navigational paradigm,
comprising:

means for providing a first display of
display elements;

means for indicating to a user of the
interactive television program guide that additional
display elements are available using cutoffs;

means for providing the user with an
opportunity to indicate a desire to access the
additional display elements;

means for sliding out the first display
in response to the user indicating a desire to access
additional display elements; and

means for sliding in a second display of
the additional display element while sliding out the
first display.

40. The system defined in claim 39 wherein
the additional display elements are program listings.

41. An interactive television program guide
system having an anchor bar comprising:

means for providing the anchor bar,
wherein the anchor bar includes multiple indicators of
locations within the interactive television program
guide;

means for highlighting an indicator associated with the user's current location within the interactive television program guide;

means for providing the user with an opportunity to change the user's location within the interactive television program guide; and

means for dynamically changing the indicators in the anchor bar in response to the user changing the user's location within the interactive television program guide.

42. The system defined in claim 41 further comprising means for arranging the indicators within the anchor bar hierarchically.

43. An interactive television program guide system having a graphical display region, comprising:

means for providing the navigational display region having a plurality of options;

means for providing a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to select an option of the navigational display region;

means for displaying the selected option in a sliver; and

means for simultaneously displaying the sliver, navigational display region, and information associated with the selected option in response to the user selecting the option.

44. The system defined in claim 43 wherein the option is a time and the information is a program listing.

45. The system defined in claim 43 wherein the option is a letter and the information is a program listing.

46. An interactive television program guide system having dynamically associated actions as options, comprising:

means for providing a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to select a program;

means for dynamically associating actions with the selected program;

means for providing the user with an opportunity to select an action of the associated actions; and

means for providing the selected action to the user.

47. The system defined in claim 46 wherein:
the system further comprises means for providing the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to access actions available for the selected program; and

the means for dynamically associating actions with the selected program comprises means for dynamically associating actions with the selected program in response to the user indication.

48. The system defined in claim 46 wherein the means for dynamically associating actions with the selected program comprises means for using metadata to associate the actions.

49. An interactive television program guide system in which displays of program listings by category are provided, comprising:

means for receiving a user indication to view listings by category for multiple categories;

means for determining whether there are listings available for each category of the multiple categories;

means for making available for selection only categories for which listings are available;

means for providing the user with an opportunity to select a category of the categories for which listings are available; and

means for providing a display of listings for the selected category.

50. An interactive television program guide system having coded indicators, comprising:

means for presenting first softkeys coded to keys on a user input device;

means for receiving selection from a user of the interactive television program guide of a program guide feature, wherein the user selection was made without using the softkeys; and

means for presenting second softkeys coded to keys on the user input device wherein the second softkeys are functionally related to the program guide feature.

51. The system defined in claim 50 wherein the means for presenting the second softkeys comprises means for providing the second softkeys in a browse display.

52. The system defined in claim 50 wherein the second softkeys are pay-per-view-related features.

53. An interactive television program guide system in which a video display synchronized to user indicated listings is provided, comprising:

means for providing a user of the interactive television program guide with opportunities to identify a plurality of listings;

means for providing the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to navigate the user identified listings;

means for providing a video display and the identified listings in response to the user indication;

means for providing the user with an opportunity to navigate within the identified listings; and

means for synchronizing the video display to the user navigation of the listings.

54. The system defined in claim 53 wherein the program listings are historical listings.

55. The system defined in claim 53 wherein the program listings are favorite listings.

56. The system defined in claim 53 wherein the program listings are listings of programs for which reminders are scheduled.

57. An interactive television program guide system in which display elements of an interactive television program guide are highlighted, comprising:

a user input device;
a display device; and
control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to
highlight a first display element using a first display
characteristic;

direct the display device to
highlight the first display element for a predefined
period of time using a second display characteristic
in response to a user of the interactive television
program guide indicating a desire to access a second
display element with the user input device;

direct the display device to
unhighlight the first display element after
highlighting the first display element for the
predefined period of time; and

direct the display device to
highlight a second display element using the first
display characteristic.

58. The system defined in claim 57 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a
first color; and
the second display characteristic is a
second color.

59. The system defined in claim 57 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a
first shade; and
the second display characteristic is a
second shade.

60. An interactive television program guide system in which display elements of an interactive television program guide are highlighted, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to highlight a first display element using a first display characteristic;

direct the display device to highlight the first display element using a second display characteristic in response to a user of the interactive television program guide selecting the first display element with the user input device; and

direct the display device to highlight the first display element using a third display characteristic in response to the user indicating a desire to access a second display element with the user input device.

61. The system defined in claim 60 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first color;

the second display characteristic is a second color; and

the third display characteristic is a third color.

62. The system defined in claim 60 wherein:
the first display characteristic is a first shade;

the second display characteristic is a second shade; and

the third display characteristic is a third shade.

63. An interactive television program guide system for providing advertisements associated with the subject matter of guide elements of an interactive television program guide, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to provide a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to access a first guide element having a subject matter with the user input device;

direct the display device to provide a first advertisement associated with the subject matter of the first guide element in response to the user accessing the first guide element with the user input device;

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to access a second guide element having a subject matter with the user input device; and

direct the display device to provide a second advertisement associated with the subject matter of the second guide element in response to the user accessing the second guide element.

64. The system defined in claim 63 wherein the first guide element is a guide feature, guide option, or guide function.

65. The system defined in claim 63 wherein:

the subject matter of the first guide element includes television program listings; and
the first advertisement is for a television program having an associated program listing withing the subject matter of the first guide element.

66. The system defined in claim 63 wherein:
the subject matter of the first guide element includes an Internet service; and
the first advertisement is for the Internet service.

67. An interactive television program guide system having a sliding navigational paradigm, comprising:

a user input device;
a display device; and
control circuitry configured to:
direct the display device to provide a first display of display elements;
direct the display device to indicate to a user of the interactive television program guide that additional display elements are available using cutoffs;
direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to access the additional display elements with the user input device;
direct the display device to slide out the first display in response to the user indicating a desire to access additional display elements with the user input device; and

direct the display device to slide in a second display of the additional display element while sliding out the first display.

68. The system defined in claim 67 wherein the additional display elements are program listings.

69. An interactive television program guide system having an anchor bar comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to display the anchor bar, wherein the anchor bar includes multiple indicators of locations within the interactive television program guide;

direct the display device to highlight an indicator associated with the user's current location within the interactive television program guide;

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to change the user's location within the interactive television program guide with the user input device; and

direct the display device to dynamically changing the indicators in the anchor bar in response to the user changing the user's location within the interactive television program guide with the user input device.

70. The system defined in claim 69 wherein the processing circuitry is further configured to direct the display device to display the indicators within the anchor bar hierarchically.

71. An interactive television program guide system having a graphical display region, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to display the navigational display region having a plurality of options;

direct the display device to provide a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to select an option of the navigational display region with the user input device;

direct the display device to display the selected option in a sliver; and

direct the display device to simultaneously display the sliver, navigational display region, and information associated with the selected option in response to the user selecting the option with the user input device.

72. The system defined in claim 71 wherein the option is a time and the information is a program listing.

73. The system defined in claim 71 wherein the option is a letter and the information is a program listing.

74. An interactive television program guide system having dynamically associated actions as options, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to provide a user of the interactive television program guide with an opportunity to select a program with the user input device;

dynamically associate actions with the selected program;

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to select an action of the associated actions with the user input device; and

direct the display device to provide the selected action to the user.

75. The system defined in claim 74 wherein the control circuitry is further configured to:

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to access actions available for the selected program with the user input device; and

dynamically associate actions with the selected program in response to the user indication.

76. The system defined in claim 74 wherein the control circuitry is further configured to use metadata to associate the actions.

77. An interactive television program guide system in which displays of program listings by category are provided, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

receive a user indication to view listings by category for multiple categories from the user input device;

determine whether there are listings available for each category of the multiple categories;

direct the display device to make available for selection with the user input device only categories for which listings are available;

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to select a category of the categories for which listings are available with the user input device; and

direct the display device to provide a display of listings for the selected category.

78. An interactive television program guide system having coded indicators, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to display first softkeys coded to keys on a user input device;

receive from the user input device a selection from a user of the interactive television program guide of a program guide feature, wherein the user selection was made without using the softkeys; and

direct the display device to display second softkeys coded to keys on the user input device whiner the second softkeys are functionally related to the program guide feature.

79. The system defined in claim 78 wherein the control circuitry is further configured to direct the display device to display the second softkeys in a browse display.

80. The system defined in claim 78 wherein the second softkeys are pay-per-view-related features.

81. An interactive television program guide system in which a video display synchronized to user indicated listings is provided, comprising:

a user input device;

a display device; and

control circuitry configured to:

direct the display device to provide a user of the interactive television program guide with opportunities to identify a plurality of listings with the user input device;

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to indicate a desire to navigate the user identified listings with the user input device;

direct the display device to display a video display and the identified listings in response to the user indication;

direct the display device to provide the user with an opportunity to navigate within the identified listings with the user input device; and

synchronize the video display to the user navigation of the listings.

82. The system defined in claim 81 wherein the program listings are historical listings.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or goal. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be achieved.

84. The system defined in claim 81 wherein the program listings are listings of programs for which reminders are scheduled.